# Missed Syphilis Screening Opportunities for Pregnant Women Living With HIV in Kenya

# 1017

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## BACKGROUND

- Screening with rapid point-of-care (POC) HIV/syphilis dual test kits is integrated into maternal and child health clinics in Kenya to improve syphilis and HIV detection.
- Yet, little is known about syphilis screening rates among pregnant women attending antenatal care (ANC) in the era of rapid POC HIV/syphilis testing.
- The PrIMI Study (NCT06203951) is an RCT evaluating different STI testing models at 8 public ANC clinics in Western Kenya.
- We evaluated syphilis screening using POC HIV/syphilis dual test kits among pregnant women enrolled in PrIMI study.

## METHODS

- Syphilis screening and treatment data were abstracted from health records of pregnant women attending ANC visits and enrolled in the PrIMI Study between Jan. 2025 to Feb. 2026.
- Women are screened for syphilis using rapid POC HIV/syphilis tests or laboratory-based non-treponemal tests (Rapid Plasma Reagin[RPR]/ Venereal Disease Research Laboratory[VDRL]) at first ANC visits, based on availability.
- Women screening positive via RPR/VDRL confirmatory test, receive three doses of intramuscular benzathine penicillin G (IM pen G) as prescribed.
- Poisson regression with robust standard errors clustered by enrollment site was used to evaluate correlates of missed syphilis screening.




**Figure 1: POC HIV/Syphilis rapid diagnostic tests available in Kenyan antenatal clinics**

**Despite availability of point-of-care screening options, many women living with HIV are not screened for syphilis**

## RESULTS

- As of Feb. 2026, 2684 women attending ANC visits were enrolled in the parent study, at a median age of 26 years (IQR 22-30) and gestation of 23 weeks (IQR 17-30) at enrollment.
- Overall, 2345/2684 (87%) women screened for syphilis, and 339 (13%) had not been screened for syphilis at the time of data abstraction.
- Compared to women without HIV, WLHIV more frequently had missing syphilis screening results (33% vs. 10%, prevalence ratio [PR] 3.62, 95% CI: 1.88-6.98, p <0.001) [Figure 2].

**Figure 2: Syphilis screening patterns among pregnant women attending ANC by HIV status (n=2684)**

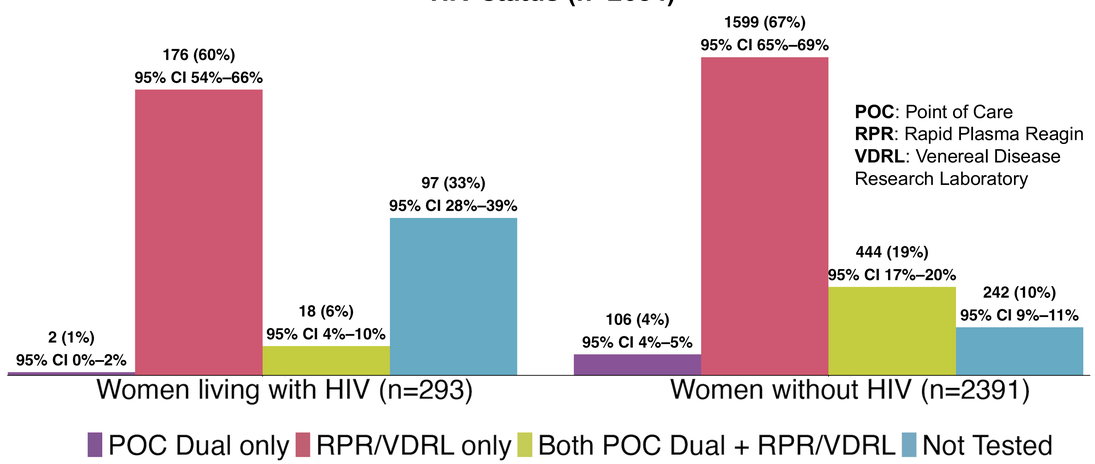



**Figure 3: Predictors of Missing Syphilis Screening (n=339)**

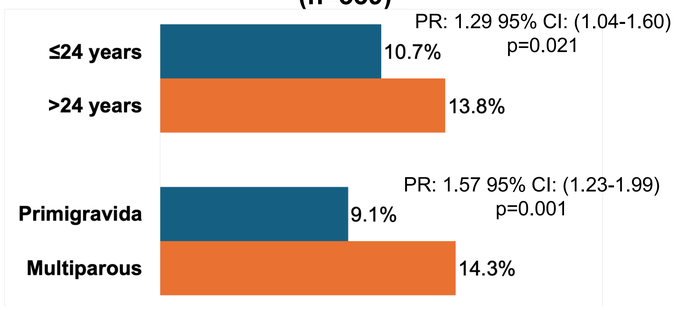
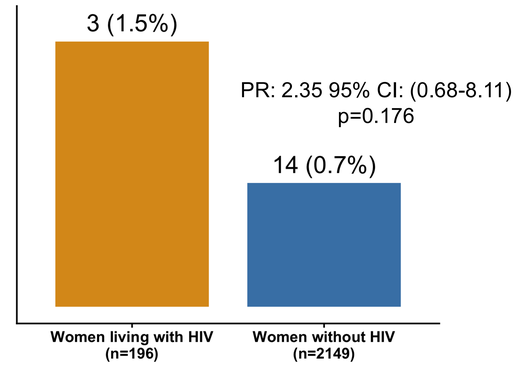



**Figure 4: Syphilis positivity by HIV status (n=2345)**




## CONCLUSIONS

- Gaps in syphilis testing were noted for WLHIV, older, and multiparous women despite POC options. Syphilis positivity was higher among WLHIV compared to those without HIV.
- Identifying barriers and optimizing implementation strategies - particularly for WLHIV - is critical to improving syphilis screening coverage.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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Want to follow up?
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